



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION**

(45) Date of publication and mention
of the grant of the patent:
16.08.2006 Bulletin 2006/33

(51) Int Cl.:
A61M 25/01 (2006.01)

(21) Application number: **03251773.2**

(22) Date of filing: **21.03.2003**

(54) **Guidewire with deflectable tip**

Führungsdraht mit ablenkbarer Spitze

Fil de guidage à extrémité déquillable

(84) Designated Contracting States:
DE FR GB NL

(30) Priority: **22.03.2002 US 366739 P**
20.08.2002 US 224168

(43) Date of publication of application:
24.09.2003 Bulletin 2003/39

(73) Proprietor: **Cordis Corporation**
Miami Lakes,
Florida 33014 (US)

(72) Inventors:
• **Hojeibane, Hikmat**
Princeton,
New Jersey 08540 (US)

• **Grewe, David**
Glen Gardner,
New Jersey 08826 (US)

(74) Representative: **Mercer, Christopher Paul et al**
Carpmaels & Ransford
43, Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2RA (GB)

(56) References cited:
EP-A- 0 377 269 **US-A- 5 480 382**
US-A- 5 891 055

Note: Within nine months from the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to the European patent granted. Notice of opposition shall be filed in a written reasoned statement. It shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

Description

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to a steerable guidewire, and more particularly to a bi-directional steerable guidewire having a tip which may be very precisely "steered," or deflected. The guidewire is particularly suitable for use in conjunction with the insertion of a catheter into a vessel of the body, or alternatively, the guidewire may be used by itself to open obstructions within a vessel or to carry a therapeutic device for removing obstructions within a vessel.

Description of the Prior Art

[0002] For many years guidewires have included a core wire with the distal end being tapered and with a coil spring mounted on the tapered distal end. These guidewires have been used to facilitate the insertion of a catheter into a vessel of the body. Generally, the guidewire is inserted into a vessel, a catheter is inserted over the guidewire and the catheter is then moved through the vessel until the distal end of the catheter is positioned at a desired location. The guidewire is then retracted from the catheter and the catheter is left in the vessel. Alternatively, the guidewire may be first inserted into the catheter with the distal portion of the guidewire extending beyond the distal end of the catheter. This assembly is then inserted into a vessel with the distal tip of the guidewire being used to facilitate movement of the guidewire and catheter through the vessel. Again, when the distal tip of the catheter has been placed in a desired location, the guidewire may be retracted thereby leaving the catheter in place within the vessel.

[0003] Another common application for guidewires is that of using the distal tip of the guidewire for removing an obstruction within a vessel. Often times this procedure is accomplished by inserting the guidewire within a vessel, moving the distal tip of the guidewire into contact with the obstruction and then very gently tapping the distal tip of the guidewire against the obstruction until the guidewire passes through the obstruction. Alternatively, various types of devices may be placed on the distal end of a guidewire for actively opening an obstruction within the vessel. Examples of such devices which may be placed on the end of the guidewires are disclosed in the following United States Patents to Robert C. Stevens: 5,116,350; 5,078,722; 4,936,845; 4,923,462; and, 4,854,325.

[0004] While most guidewires used today do not include a mechanism for deflecting or steering the tip of the guidewire, it is very desirable to provide tip steering in order to facilitate movement of the guidewire through the tortuous vessels of the body. There are many patents directed toward different mechanisms for deflecting the

distal tip of a guidewire in order to steer the guidewire. Examples of such guidewires are disclosed in the following patents: U.S. Patent No. 4,815,478 to Maurice Buchbinder, et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,813,434 to Maurice Buchbinder, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,037,391 to Julius G. Hammerslag, et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,203,772 to Gary R. Hammerslag, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,146,338 to Kenneth C. Gardeski, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,126,649 to Robert A. VanTassel, et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,059,739 to James C. Baumann and U.S. Patent No. 5,372,587 to Julius G. Hammerslag, et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,940,062 to Hilary J. Hampton, et al., discloses a balloon catheter having a steerable tip section.

[0005] While each of the latter group of patents disclose guidewires having some degree of steerability, there is a need to have a guidewire with very precise steering in a guidewire of a very small diameter which is suitable for the purposes described above. More particularly, there is an important need for a very small diameter guidewire having a distal tip which may be deflected very precisely in either of two directions to enhance steerability and which is suitable for vascular applications.

[0006] EP-A-0377269 discloses a bi-directional steerable catheter of the type set forth in the preamble of the accompanying claim 1.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, there is provided a bi-directional steerable guidewire having a deflectable tip which includes an elongated flexible tubing, a flexible helical coil attached to the distal portion of the flexible tubing, an elongated deflection member which is slidably disposed within the tubing and within the helical coil. The proximal portion of the deflection member may be of a cylindrical configuration. The distal portion is flattened to form a deflection ribbon which extends in a plane. In addition, a retaining ribbon is attached to the distal end of the flexible tubing and is oriented to extend in a plane which is generally parallel to the plane of the deflection ribbon. An attachment member which may take the form of a rounded bead, preferably formed from epoxy, engages the distal end of the helical coil, the distal end of the deflection ribbon and the distal end of the retaining ribbon so that longitudinal movement of the deflection member in a distal direction causes the distal end of the helical coil to be deflected in one direction and longitudinal movement of the deflection member in a proximal direction causes the distal end of the helical coil to be deflected in another opposite direction.

[0008] The retaining ribbon and the deflection ribbon are normally biased in an arcuate configuration to thereby cause the distal end of the flexible helical coil to be biased into a normally curved shape.

[0009] In accordance with a further aspect of the present invention, the distal portion of the deflection ribbon engages the attachment member, or rounded bead,

at a location offset from the center of the attachment member, and the distal portion of the retaining ribbon engages the attachment member at a location offset from the center of the attachment member. Preferably, the retaining ribbon engages the attachment member at a location offset from the center portion of the attachment member in the opposite direction from the offset location of the deflection ribbon.

[0010] In accordance with still another aspect of the present invention, the deflection ribbon and the retaining ribbon are connected to each other within the attachment member. Preferably these two elements are formed as a single unitary element. In a preferred embodiment of the invention the cylindrical deflection member is flattened to form the deflection ribbon and is further flattened at its distal end to form the retaining ribbon. The retaining ribbon is bent 180 degrees with respect to the deflection ribbon to form a generally U-shaped bend to thereby establish a predetermined spacing between the ribbons and to also cause these ribbons to remain parallel to each other.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011]

Figure 1 is an enlarged elevational view of the steerable guidewire with a deflectable tip and control handle in accordance with the one aspect of the present invention;

Figure 2 is an enlarged sectional view showing the distal end of the steerable guidewire in its normal pre-shaped position;

Figure 3 is an enlarged sectional view showing the distal end of the steerable guidewire of Figure 2 taken along the line 3-3;

Figure 4 is a partially sectional view showing the control handle for the steerable guidewire; and,

Figures 5 and 5A are sectional views showing the steerable guidewire deflected from its normal position to opposite extremes of deflection.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0012] Figure 1 generally illustrates a steerable guidewire system 10 which embodies the present invention and comprises a steerable guidewire 12 coupled to a control handle 14. More particularly, the steerable guidewire comprises an elongated hypotube 16, a helical coil 18 attached to and extending from the distal end of the hypotube 16. The helical coil 18 is preferably formed from platinum tungsten with the proximal turns being wound such that adjacent turns of the proximal portion are in contact with each other.

[0013] While the preferred embodiment of the present invention includes the helical coil 18, this element may take the form of any flexible cylindrical member, such as for example a thin metallic tube with or without portions

of the tube removed by, for example laser cutting, so as to form a very flexible cylindrical member. An elongated deflection member 20 extends from the proximal end of the control handle through the hypotube 16 and through the helical coil 18, and is connected into an attachment member, or rounded bead 22, which is disposed at the distal tip of the helical coil 18. In addition, a retaining ribbon 24 is connected to the distal end of the hypotube 16 and is also connected to the rounded bead 22.

[0014] The control handle 14 generally comprises a slidable control knob 26 which may be moved longitudinally with respect to the control handle. The control handle 14 is coupled to the deflection member 20. As will be discussed in more detail, the longitudinal movement of the slidable control knob 26 causes deflection of the distal tip of the guidewire in either an upward or downward direction.

[0015] Figures 2 and 3 illustrate in more detail the distal portion of the steerable guidewire 12. As may be appreciated, Figure 3 is a view of the guidewire 12 shown in Figure 2 with the guidewire being rotated 90 degrees about its longitudinal axis. More particularly, the proximal end of the helical coil 18 is bonded, preferably by use of an epoxy, to the outer surface near the distal end of the hypotube 16. The elongated deflection member 20 takes the form of a small diameter cylindrical deflection member 20 having an intermediate portion which is flattened to form a thin deflection ribbon 34 having a thickness of approximately 50.8 μm (.002 inches). The distal end of the cylindrical deflection member 20 is further flattened to a thickness of approximately 38.1 μm (.0015 inches) and is bent back 180 degrees to form a U-shaped bend 26a between the deflection ribbon 34 and the retaining ribbon 24. The proximal end of the retaining ribbon 24 is bonded, preferably by use of epoxy, to the outer surface of the distal end of the hypotube 16. The retaining ribbon 24 is aligned in a plane parallel to the plane of the deflection ribbon 34 and the U-shaped portion between the ribbons is encapsulated by the attachment member which preferably takes the form of a rounded epoxy bead 22 bonded to the distal tip of the helical coil 18.

[0016] As may be appreciated, with this unitary construction of the ribbon members, these members remain aligned so that both lie in planes parallel to each other. In addition, the U-shaped bend portion when encapsulated into the rounded bead 22 causes the retaining ribbon and deflection ribbon to be properly spaced with respect to each other.

[0017] As illustrated in Figure 2, the retaining ribbon 24 is preferably attached to the rounded bead 22 at a position offset from the center of the bead in the same direction that the retaining ribbon 24 is offset from the longitudinal axis of the steerable guidewire 12. In addition, the deflection ribbon 34 is attached to the bead at a position offset from the center of the bead in an opposite direction from the offset of the retaining ribbon 24.

[0018] Also, as may be seen in Figure 2, the deflection ribbon 34 and the retaining ribbon 24 are pre-shaped into

an arcuate, or curved, configuration to thereby maintain the helical coil 18 in a normally curved configuration. The ribbons 24, 34 are pre-shaped such that the distal tip of the guidewire curves away from the longitudinal axis of the guidewire in a direction toward that side of the guidewire containing the retaining ribbon 24.

[0019] Figure 4 illustrates in more detail the control handle 14 which includes a cylindrical body portion 38 with the slidable control knob 26 being mounted for longitudinal movement along the cylindrical body portion 38 of the control handle 14. The pair of set screws 28, 30 extend through the slidable control knob 26 and lock onto the elongated deflection member 20 which extends through the control handle 14. In addition, the control handle 14 includes a coaxial hypotube 40 which is disposed about the deflection member 20 and which is locked in place within the control handle by another set of set screws 32, 33. The coaxial hypotube 40 serves to prevent the deflection member 20 from buckling as the slidable control knob is moved in a distal direction. Still further, the control handle 14 includes a pin vise 36 which serves to clamp onto the deflection member 20.

[0020] In operation, as previously described, the distal tip of the steerable guidewire 12 is normally biased into a downwardly curved position as illustrated in Figure 2 because of the curve of the pre-shaped deflection ribbon 34 and the retaining ribbon 24. When the slidable control knob 26 is moved distally, the deflection member 20 will be moved distally thereby causing the deflection ribbon 34 to move in a distal direction. As the deflection ribbon is moved distally, a force is applied to the top portion of the rounded bead 22. The retaining ribbon 24 is attached to the lower portion of the bead 22 to thereby maintain the bead at a fixed distance from the distal end of the hypotube 16. As the deflection ribbon 34 is moved to the right, the tip of the guidewire is caused to deflect downwardly to a maximum position of deflection as shown in Figure 5A. Since the deflection ribbon 34 and the retaining ribbon 24 are pre-shaped prior to any activation of the steerable guidewire, the amount of force required to deflect the guidewire in this direction is very small thereby preventing buckling of the deflection ribbon 34 as the deflection ribbon is pushed distally. As the deflection ribbon 34 is moved distally, the upper turns of the helical coil become slightly stretched and the lower turns of the coil become slightly compressed. The deflection member 20 has a diameter of about 165.1 μm (.0065 inches) and the deflection ribbon has a thickness of about 50.8 μm (.002 inches) to thereby provide sufficient stiffness to prevent the buckling of these elements when the deflection member 20 is pushed distally. This construction also provides sufficient stiffness to transmit the necessary force to the distal tip of the guidewire.

[0021] When the slidable control knob 26 is moved in a proximal direction (to the left in Figure 4) the deflection member 20 will be pulled to the left to thereby cause the deflection ribbon 34 to pull on the top portion of the bead 22. Since again the retaining ribbon 24 causes the lower

portion of the bead to remain at a fixed distance from the distal end of the hypotube 16, the tip of the guidewire 12 is caused to bend in an upward direction to a maximum deflection as shown in Figure 5. Since the deflection ribbon 34 is in tension when the deflection member 20 is pulled, there is no concern for buckling of the deflection ribbon 34. As the deflection ribbon 34 is moved proximally as shown in Figure 5, the upper coil turns become slightly compressed and the lower coil turns become somewhat stretched.

[0022] In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the elongated deflection member 20, retaining ribbon 24 and deflection ribbon 34 are constructed of nitinol, but these elements may be formed from other flexible materials including polymers. The helical coil 18 preferably has an outside coil diameter of about .013 inches and is constructed from an alloy comprised of about 92 percent platinum and 8 percent tungsten, but this element may also be constructed from numerous other materials. It is desirable that the coil exhibit the characteristic of being radiopaque to X-rays to assist in the positioning of the distal tip of the steerable guidewire 12. The deflection member 20 is formed from a single cylindrical nitinol wire of about 165.1 μm (.0065 inches) in diameter having an intermediate portion which is flattened to form the deflection ribbon 34 with a thickness of about 50.8 μm (.002 inches), and a distal portion which is flattened to form the retaining ribbon 24 with a thickness of about 38.1 μm (.0015 inches). The retaining ribbon 24 is bent back 180 degrees to form a generally U-shaped bend, which is subsequently encapsulated within the rounded bead 22. The rounded bead 22 is preferably formed with epoxy, but may be formed with soldering or by welding.

[0023] It has been found that the addition of graphite between the deflection member 20 and deflection ribbon 34, and the inner lumen of the hypotube 16 provides lubrication. Other lubricants, such as Teflon (RTM) or MDX may be used for this purpose. The helical coil 18 is preferably coated with an elastomeric polymer 41 on its distal end to act as a sealant preventing the entry of blood and contrast media into the guidewire and a fluorinated polymer 39, such as Teflon (RTM), on its proximal end for lubrication purposes.

[0024] It may be seen that the guidewire as disclosed may be very easily and very precisely deflected in either of two directions for very precise steering of the guidewire through the vessels of the body. As may be apparent, the disclosed guidewire may be used for placement of a catheter within the vasculature of the human body, it may be used by itself to cross an obstruction within the vessels or it may be used to carry a therapeutic device mounted on the distal end of the guidewire for purposes of removing obstructions which may exist within a vessel of the body.

[0025] The preceding specific embodiment is illustrated of the practice of this invention. It is to be understood, however, that other variations may also be employed without departing from the scope of the invention as here-

inafter claimed.

Claims

1. A bi-directional steerable guidewire (12) having a deflectable tip which comprises:

an elongated flexible tubing (16) having proximal and distal portions;

a flexible helical coil (18) having proximal and distal ends, the proximal end of said helical coil is attached to the distal portion of the flexible tubing;

an elongated deflection member (20) having proximal and distal portions and being slidably disposed within said tubing (16) and within said helical coil (18), the distal portion of said deflection member being flattened to form a deflection ribbon (34) which extends in a plane;

a retaining ribbon (24) having proximal and distal ends, the proximal end of the retaining ribbon is attached to the distal portion of the flexible tubing (16) and the retaining ribbon is oriented to extend in a plane which is generally parallel to the plane of the deflection ribbon (34); and, an attachment member (22) engaging the distal end of the helical coil (18), the distal portion of the deflection member (20) and the distal end of the retaining ribbon (24) so that longitudinal movement of the deflection member (20) in a distal direction causes the distal end of the helical coil (18) to be deflected in one direction and longitudinal movement of the deflection member (20) in a proximal direction causes the distal end of the helical coil (18) to deflect in another opposite direction,

characterised in that the retaining ribbon (24) and the deflection ribbon (34) are normally biased in an arcuate configuration to thereby cause the distal end of the helical coil (18) to be normally biased in a curved shape.

2. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 1, wherein the proximal portion of said deflection member (20) is of a circular cross section which extends from the proximal portion of the flexible tubing (16) to approximately the distal portion of the tubing.
3. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 2, wherein the proximal end of said retaining ribbon (24) extends from the distal portion of the flexible tubing (16) to approximately the distal end of the flexible helical coil (18).
4. A steerable guidewire as defined in any preceding Claim, wherein the attachment member takes the form of a rounded bead (22).

5. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 4, wherein the rounded bead (22) is formed with an epoxy material.

6. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 4 or 5, wherein the rounded bead (22) contacts the distal end of the helical coil (18) to define a circular surface at the distal end of the coil and the deflection ribbon (34) engages the rounded bead (22) at a location offset from the center of the circular surface of the rounded bead.

7. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 6, wherein the distal end of the retaining ribbon (24) engages the rounded bead (22) at a location offset from the center of the circular surface of the rounded bead.

8. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 7, wherein the distal end of the retaining ribbon (24) engages the rounded bead (22) at a location offset from the center of the circular surface in an opposite direction from the offset location of the deflection ribbon (34).

9. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 8, wherein the deflection member (20) and the retaining ribbon (24) are joined to each other within the rounded bead (22).

10. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 9, wherein the deflection ribbon (34) and the retaining ribbon (24) are formed as a single unitary element.

11. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 10, wherein the deflection ribbon (34) and the retaining ribbon (24) are joined to form a generally U-shaped configuration to thereby provide a predetermined spacing between the deflection ribbon (34) and the retaining ribbon (24) and to maintain the deflection ribbon and the retaining ribbon in planes which are parallel to each other.

12. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 11, wherein the deflection ribbon (34) is formed by flattening an intermediate portion of the deflection member (20) and the retaining ribbon is formed by flattening a distal portion of the deflection member (20).

13. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 12, wherein the retaining ribbon (24) is of a thickness which is less than the thickness of the deflection ribbon (34).

14. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 13, wherein the deflection ribbon (34) is of a thickness equal to 50.8 μm (002 inches) and the retaining ribbon (24) is of a thickness equal to 38.1 μm (.0015 inches).

15. A steerable guidewire as defined in any preceding claim, wherein the proximal portion of the elongated

flexible tubing (16) is coupled to a control handle (14) and the elongated deflection member (20) is mounted with the control handle (14) for longitudinal movement.

16. A Steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 15, wherein said control handle (14) includes a movable knob (26) which is coupled to the elongated deflection member (20) for longitudinal positioning of the deflection member.
17. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 16, wherein said control handle (14) is coupled to the elongated flexible tubing (16) with a release mechanism so that the handle may be removed from the guidewire (12).
18. A steerable guidewire as defined in Claim 17, wherein the elongated deflection member (20) extends through the entire length of the control handle (14) and beyond the proximal end of the control handle.

Patentansprüche

1. Bidirektionaler lenkbarer Führungsdraht (12) mit einer ablenkbaren Spitze, der folgendes aufweist:

eine längliche flexible Röhre (16) mit einem proximalen und einem distalen Abschnitt; eine flexible Helixspule (18) mit einem proximalen und einem distalen Ende, wobei das proximale Ende der Helixspule an dem distalen Abschnitt der flexiblen Röhre angebracht ist;
ein längliches Ablenkelement (20), das einen proximalen und einen distalen Abschnitt aufweist und gleitfähig in der Röhre (16) und in der Helixspule (18) angeordnet ist, wobei der distale Abschnitt des Ablenkelements abgeflacht ist, um ein Ablenkungsband (34) zu bilden, das sich in einer Ebene erstreckt;
ein Halteband (24) mit einem proximalen und einem distalen Ende, wobei das proximale Ende des Haltebands an dem distalen Abschnitt der flexiblen Röhre (16) angebracht ist und das Halteband so ausgerichtet ist, daß es sich in einer Ebene erstreckt, die allgemein parallel zu der Ebene des Ablenkungsbands (34) ist; und
ein Befestigungselement (22), das an dem distalen Ende der Helixspule (18), dem distalen Abschnitt des Ablenkelements (20) und dem distalen Ende des Haltebands (24) angreift, so daß eine longitudinale Bewegung des Ablenkelements (20) in eine distale Richtung eine Ablenkung des distalen Endes Helixspule (18) in eine Richtung bewirkt und eine longitudinale Bewegung des Ablenkelements (20) in einer proximalen Richtung eine Ablenkung des distalen Endes Helixspule (18) in eine andere entgegen-

gesetzte Richtung bewirkt,
dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Halteband (24) und das Ablenkband (34) normalerweise in einer Bogenkonfiguration vorgespannt sind, um dabei zu bewirken, daß das distale Ende der Helixspule (18) normalerweise in einer gekrümmten Form vorgespannt ist.

2. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 1, bei dem der proximale Abschnitt des Ablenkelements (20) einen runden Querschnitt aufweist, der sich von dem proximalen Abschnitt der flexiblen Röhre (16) zu etwa dem distalen Abschnitt der Röhre erstreckt.
3. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 2, bei dem sich das proximale Ende des Haltebandes (24) von dem distalen Abschnitt der flexiblen Röhre (16) zu etwa dem distalen Ende der flexiblen Helixspule (18) erstreckt.
4. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei dem das Befestigungselement die Form eines abgerundeten Tropfens (22) annimmt.
5. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 4, bei dem der abgerundete Tropfen (22) mit einem Epoxidmaterial gebildet ist.
6. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 4 oder 5, bei dem der abgerundete Tropfen (22) das distale Ende der Helixspule (18) berührt, um eine runde Oberfläche an dem distalen Ende der Spule zu definieren, und das Halteband (34) an dem abgerundeten Tropfen an einem Ort angreift, der gegenüber der Mitte der kreisförmigen Oberfläche des abgerundeten Tropfens versetzt ist.
7. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 7, bei dem das distale Ende des Haltebands (24) an dem abgerundeten Tropfen (22) an einem Ort angreift, der gegenüber der Mitte der kreisförmigen Oberfläche des abgerundeten Tropfens versetzt ist.
8. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 7, bei dem das distale Ende des Haltebandes (24) an dem abgerundeten Tropfen (22) an einem Ort angreift, der gegenüber der Mitte der kreisförmigen Oberfläche in einer entgegengesetzten Richtung von dem versetzten Ort des Ablenkbands (34) versetzt ist.
9. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 8, bei dem das Ablenkelement (20) und das Halteband (24) in dem abgerundeten Tropfen (22) miteinander verbunden sind.
10. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 9, bei dem das Ablenkband (34) und das Halteband (24) aus

einem einzelnen einheitlichen Element gebildet sind.

11. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 10, bei dem das Ablenkband (34) und das Halteband (24) miteinander verbunden sind, um eine allgemein U-förmige Konfiguration zu bilden, um dabei einen vorbestimmten Abstand zwischen dem Ablenkband (34) und dem Halteband (24) vorzusehen und das Ablenkband und das Halteband in Ebenen zu halten, die zueinander parallel sind. 5 10
12. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 11, bei dem das Ablenkband (34) durch Abflachen eines Zwischenabschnitts des Ablenkelements (20) gebildet ist und das Halteband durch Abflachen eines distalen Abschnitts des Ablenkelements (20) gebildet ist. 15
13. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 12, bei dem das Halteband (24) eine Dicke aufweist, die geringer ist als die Dicke des Ablenkbands (34). 20
14. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 13, bei dem das Ablenkband (34) eine Dicke von etwa 50,8 um (0,002 Zoll) und das Halteband (24) eine Dicke von etwa 38,1 µm (0,0015 Zoll) aufweist. 25
15. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei dem der proximale Abschnitt der länglichen flexiblen Röhre (16) mit einem Steuerhandstück (14) verbunden ist und das längliche Ablenkelement (20) an dem Steuerhandstück (14) für eine longitudinale Bewegung befestigt ist. 30
16. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 15, bei dem das Steuerhandstück (14) einen beweglichen Griff (26) aufweist, der mit dem länglichen Ablenkelement (20) für die longitudinale Positionierung des Ablenkelements verbunden ist. 35 40
17. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 16, bei dem das Steuerhandstück (14) mit der länglichen flexiblen Röhre (16) mit einem Lösemechanismus so verbunden ist, daß das Handstück von dem Führungsdraht (12) entfernt werden kann. 45
18. Lenkbarer Führungsdraht nach Anspruch 17, bei dem sich das längliche Ablenkelement (20) durch die gesamte Länge des Steuerhandstücks (14) und über das proximale Ende des Steuerhandstücks hinaus erstreckt. 50

Revendications

1. Fil de guidage orientable bidirectionnel (12) comprenant une extrémité béquillable qui comprend :

un tube souple allongé (16) comprenant des parties proximale et distale ;
un enroulement hélicoïdal souple (18) comprenant des extrémités proximale et distale, l'extrémité proximale dudit enroulement hélicoïdal étant fixé à la partie distale du tube souple ;
un élément de béquillage allongé (20) comprenant des parties proximale et distale et étant disposé de manière coulissante à l'intérieur dudit tube (16) et à l'intérieur dudit enroulement hélicoïdal (18), la partie distale dudit élément de béquillage étant aplatie pour former un ruban de béquillage (34) qui s'étend sur un plan ;
un ruban de retenue (24) comprenant des extrémités proximale et distale, l'extrémité proximale du ruban de retenue étant fixée à la partie distale du tube souple (16) et le ruban de retenue est orienté de façon à se prolonger sur un plan qui est globalement parallèle au plan du ruban de béquillage (34) ; et
un élément de raccordement (22) qui met en prise l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement hélicoïdal (18), la partie distale de l'élément de béquillage (20) et l'extrémité distale du ruban de retenue (24) de telle sorte qu'un mouvement longitudinal de l'élément de béquillage (20) dans une direction distale amène l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement hélicoïdal (18) à être béquillée dans une direction, et qu'un mouvement longitudinal de l'élément de béquillage (20) dans une direction proximale amène l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement hélicoïdal (18) à être béquillé dans une autre direction opposée,
caractérisé en ce que le ruban de retenue (24) et le ruban de béquillage (34) sont sollicités normalement dans une configuration en arc de façon à amener ainsi l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement hélicoïdal (18) à être sollicité normalement dans une forme courbe.

2. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la partie proximale dudit élément de béquillage (20) présente une section transversale circulaire qui s'étend depuis la partie proximale du tube souple (16) jusqu'à approximativement la partie distale du tube. 55
3. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la partie proximale dudit ruban de retenue (24) s'étend depuis la partie distale du tube souple (16) jusqu'à approximativement l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement hélicoïdal souple (18).
4. Fil de guidage orientable selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'élément de raccordement prend la forme d'un bourrelet arrondi (22).

5. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 4, dans lequel le bourrelet arrondi (22) est fait en un matériau époxy.
6. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 4 ou 5, dans lequel le bourrelet arrondi (22) est en contact avec l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement hélicoïdal (18) de manière à définir une surface circulaire au niveau de l'extrémité distale de l'enroulement, et le ruban de béquillage (34) met en prise le bourrelet arrondi (22) au niveau d'un emplacement décalé par rapport au centre de la surface circulaire du bourrelet arrondi.
7. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 6, dans lequel l'extrémité distale du ruban de retenue (24) met en prise le bourrelet arrondi (22) au niveau d'un emplacement décalé par rapport au centre de la surface circulaire du bourrelet arrondi.
8. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 7, dans lequel l'extrémité distale du ruban de retenue (24) met en prise le bourrelet arrondi (22) au niveau d'un emplacement décalé par rapport au centre de la surface circulaire dans une direction opposée à l'emplacement décalé du ruban de béquillage (34).
9. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 8, dans lequel l'élément de béquillage (20) et le ruban de retenue (24) sont réunis l'un à l'autre à l'intérieur du bourrelet arrondi (22).
10. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 9, dans lequel le ruban de béquillage (34) et le ruban de retenue (24) sont formés comme un seul et unique élément.
11. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 10, dans lequel le ruban de béquillage (34) et le ruban de retenue (24) se rejoignent pour former une configuration globalement en forme de U, de façon à procurer ainsi un espacement prédéterminé entre le ruban de béquillage (34) et le ruban de retenue (24) et à maintenir le ruban de béquillage et le ruban de retenue sur des plans qui sont parallèles l'un à l'autre.
12. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 11, dans lequel le ruban de béquillage (34) est formé en aplatissant une partie intermédiaire de l'élément de béquillage (20), et le ruban de retenue est formé en aplatissant une partie distale de l'élément de béquillage (20).
13. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 12, dans lequel le ruban de retenue (24) a une épaisseur qui est inférieure à l'épaisseur du ruban de béquillage (34).
14. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 13, dans lequel le ruban de béquillage (34) a une épaisseur égale à 50,8 mm (0,002 pouce), et le ruban de retenue (24) a une épaisseur égale à 38,1 mm (0,0015 pouce).
15. Fil de guidage orientable selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel la partie proximale du tube souple allongé (16) est couplée à une poignée de commande (14), et l'élément de béquillage allongé (20) est monté avec la poignée de commande (14) pour un mouvement longitudinal.
16. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 15, dans lequel ladite poignée de commande (14) comprend un bouton déplaçable (26) qui est couplé à l'élément de béquillage allongé (20) pour un positionnement longitudinal de l'élément de béquillage.
17. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 16, dans lequel ladite poignée de commande (14) est couplé au tube souple allongé (16) avec un mécanisme de libération de telle sorte que la poignée de commande peut être retirée du fil guide (12).
18. Fil de guidage orientable selon la revendication 17, dans lequel l'élément de béquillage allongé (20) se prolonge sur toute la longueur de la poignée de commande (14) et au-delà de l'extrémité proximale de la poignée de commande.

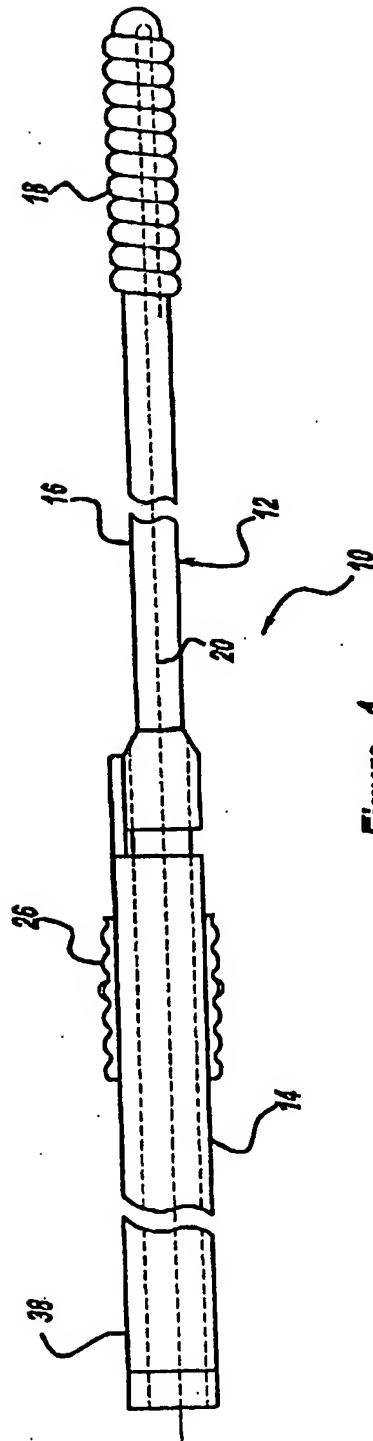


Figure 1

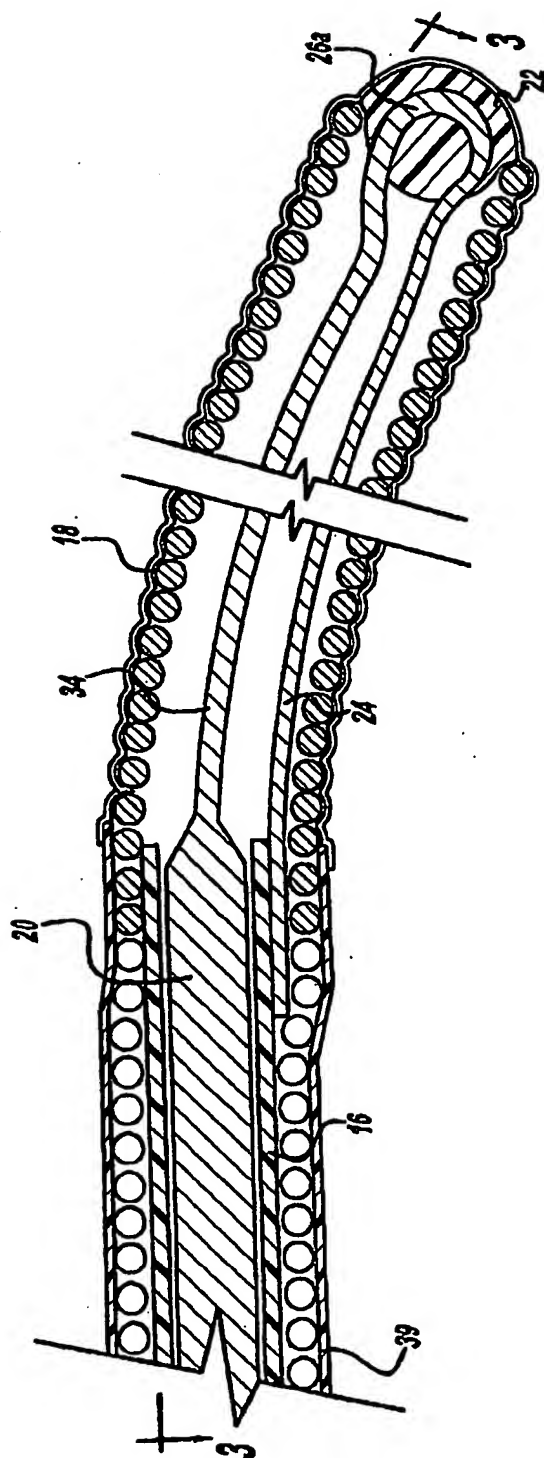


Figure-2

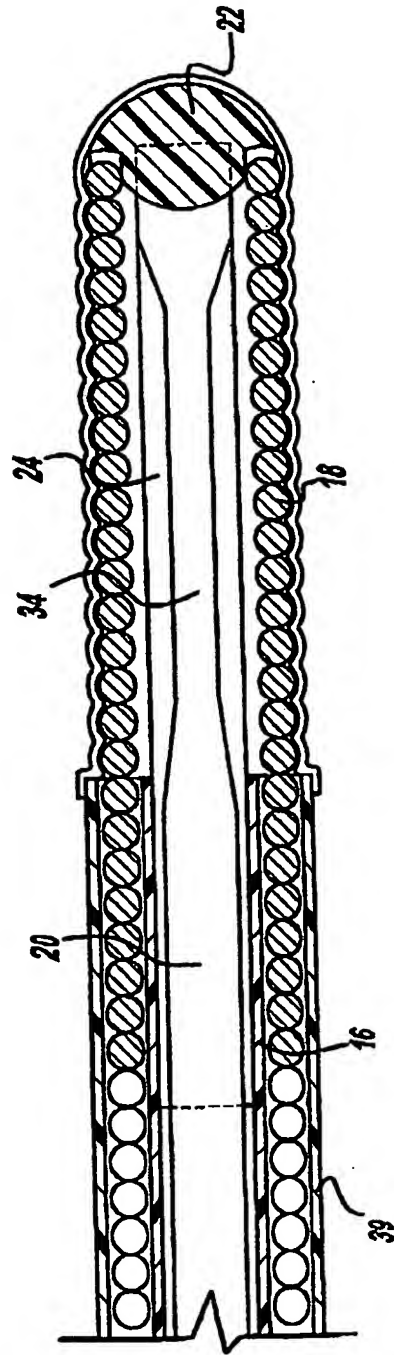


Figure - 3

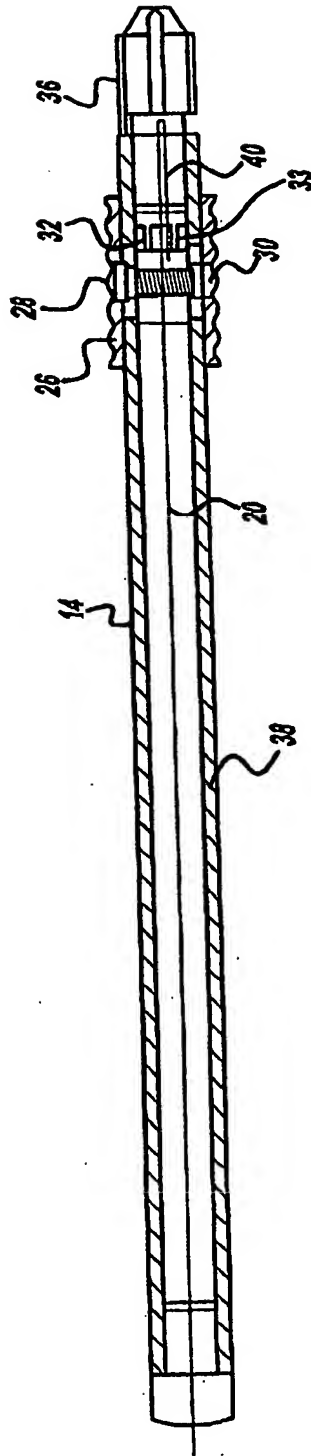


Figure - 4

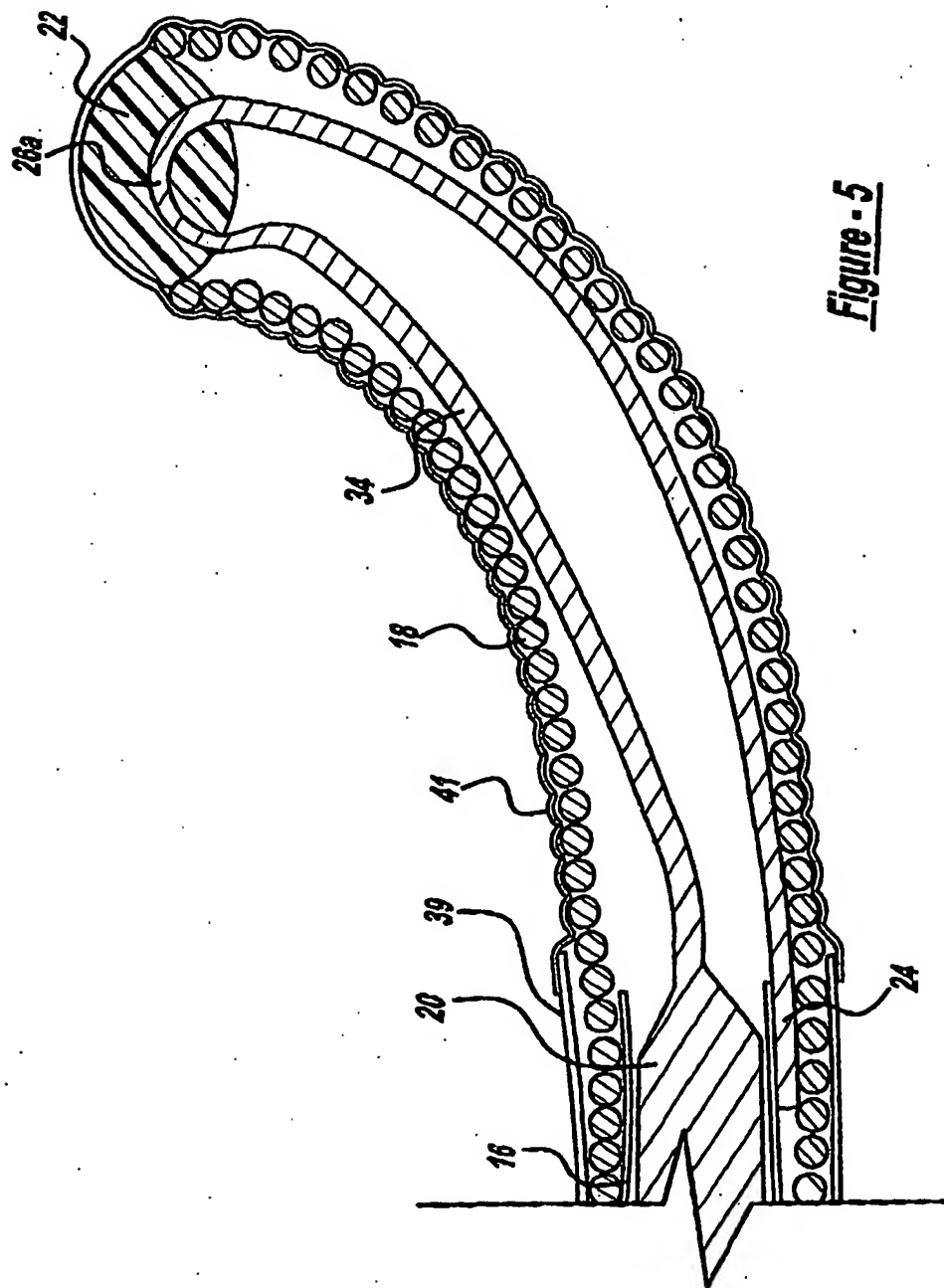


Figure - 5

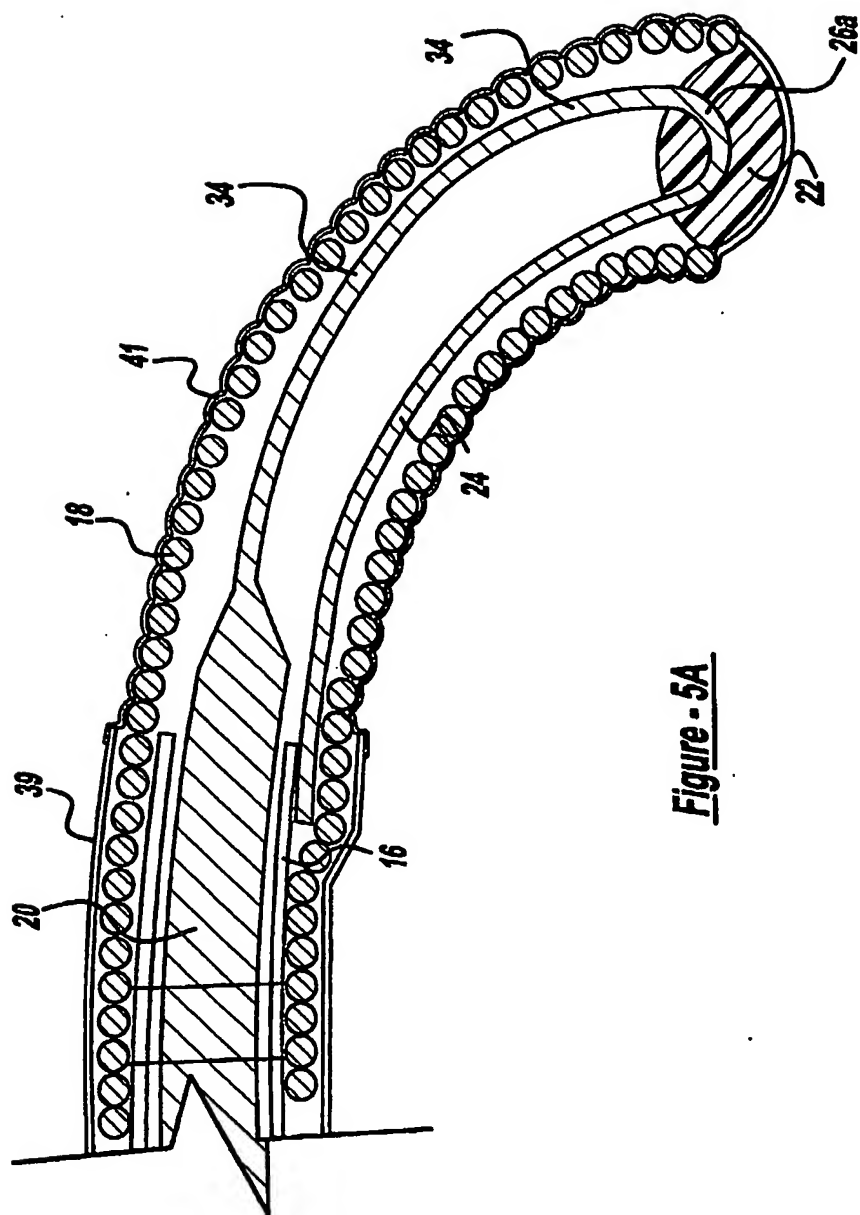


Figure - 5A